



QCWA HOT-LINE REPORT

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Banner Stand

In the May - August issue of the HLR, Volume 18, No.2, I write about a nice idea from Jerry Giesler, W4TYU, of Chapter 60, concerning a portable stand for their banner. This was made out of PVC pipe and was easy to set up in a restaurant, for instance, at a meeting. A number of people wrote and told us that they had constructed a similar stand and really appreciate the information.

Now comes an improvement on the original idea. From Walter Rollick, W4IGE, Chapter 196, we have a drawing for a stand also constructed from PVC pipe and fittings. This gets a little complicated to describe but basically has two feet that attach on the bottom of the original vertical pieces so it can be self supporting.

Tell you what .. if you want the diagram and description of this modification for the banner stand let me know and I will put one in the mail for you. Perhaps it can be scanned and then we can place that file as an attached file on an e-mail for those that can handle 'attached files'.

Signatures and Callsigns

Just a brief remark about signatures and callsigns. When you send any kind of message to Headquarters, please include your callsign as well as your signature. We file, in the data base, by callsign, and when we do not have it then we have to reorder the data base by name and then look up your callsign. All this takes time and that becomes important when we have a number of these 'look-ups' to do a day. To me, and many others, it is just natural to include my callsign on any publication that I put out. In fact that is almost better than my name for people will remember callsigns and not names.

We receive a good deal of QCWA correspondence from fairly new amateurs and so many have yet to learn about the importance of their callsigns in this fraternity. Right now, with all the vanity changes being made, we must strain to catch up with everyone. By the way .. have you told us about your new vanity callsign? There is no way we can obtain these changes except through your good advice.

For all of you involved with the internet and e-mail .. here is a thought. For most of us we use some type of e-mail program, I use Eudora. There is a place to insert your signature in the program and then at the end of each message it signs your signature. In my case I usually say "73" and then close. Eudora then attaches "Jim Walsh, W7LVN". I have now added one more line underneath that portion to spell out the address of QCWA's Home page. Another of our members has added a line to his messages which in effect says "tell them you saw it in their ad" .. that is a way to thank our advertisers. Maybe even advertise QCWA in some manner.

Address Search

In prior issue of the HLR I have asked for people to check their mailing addresses and let us know if what they find agrees with what we have on their mailing label. The information that we have on the mailing label is what you have given us. In the process of mailing the Journal we have to check the address against a USPS CD Rom of all the addresses in the United States, those that cannot be corrected are "error" addresses and have to be processed by themselves and at a higher postage rate. I now have a list of some 233 'error' addresses which cannot be processed, this is out of some 9800 addresses we started with to mail domestic. I find small towns and an address such as "Bethel Ln", and the program comes back and says "No such Street", then on to another one. This new one gives me an address of "135 Main" and when I check it I find that there is a North and South Main street. We go back to our basic resources, an application or card file, and all we find is the 135 Main, no North, no South. Shall we gamble and change it (50% chance of being right).. and so we leave it alone.

I have printed this list of "error" addresses and taken them one by one and processed them with the current USPS disk and still cannot find a match. Then for an interesting experiment I asked our friends at the local post office bulk mail center to try their luck with the disk they have. Guess what, they could not come up with a match either. This means that the information is probably not in the USPS CD Rom, and this poses a problem.

The USPO demands that we have our mailing list 100% zip+four coded to obtain a preferred non-profit third class mailing rate. That is OK, but under the circumstances they are asking for something that even they cannot do for they do not have the information. That which we have to check against is not complete. So a long letter is going out to the US Postmaster General, a committee on non-profit mailing and all my representatives in the Congress and House. While they can argue about a lot of goings on in the government, how about righting a wrong that they are committing !

Dayton

A whole bunch of things came out of the Dayton Hamvention this year. I am pleased with our operation of the booth and there was plenty of help. Jack Kelleher, W4ZC, President; Gary Harrison, K0BC, Vice President; Duke Knief, W2YTO, Treasurer; John Edel, K8LBZ, Director and myself manned the booth. In addition we had Bob Buus, W2OD, Director; and Harry Dannals, W2HD, Past President .. show at the booth and give us some effort. Comparing this year with last year, we were about 1/3 ahead of last year even though the attendance was down somewhat.

There was a large group of our members who stopped by, signed the log sheet and talked about topics that were on their minds. One of those



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topics concerned awards. The first of many certificates that is available is the 50 YR award. Check your mailing label and the pair of numbers on the line above your name, at the end of the row is the date we have as your first licensed date. For instance, if that date is 1947 or earlier, you are entitled to a 50 yr certificate, just for the asking. They then go up in 5 yr increments, to 75 years. You might also check your membership card, it, too, shows the first year you were licensed.

We did a brisk business in Quarter Century Wireless membership pins. There are two versions. The plain one is the Old Man logo with your call engraved below the logo. It is priced at \$10.00. Then there is the Year membership pin. This, also, is the Oldman Logo, your call is engraved and below that engraving is a banner which proclaims the number of years you have been licensed. These start at 25 years and increase by 5 years. These pins are \$15 each. For both pins we have about four days turn-around here after we receive the order.

Lots of comments about the QSO parties, with the common thread being that it was fun to talk with some non-QCWA amateurs. Several of our members went all out by sending applications and a letter to each person that appeared to be eligible. They got some good replies also. Next year it will be better and the solar flux will also be better than it was this year.

Jim, W7LVN

A New Idea.

I have been interested in GPS operations ever since one of my friends showed me the operation and we obtained the latitude and longitude and elevation of our repeater here in Eugene. A year ago at Dayton there was a booth demonstrating the 'marriage' of a GPS unit and two meters and some neat software which also would allow you to make your own maps, if you wished. When I started to go back to that booth I couldn't find it and finally made contact with them at our North West Division Convention in June of last year.

Last Fall I attended the Pacific Division Convention in N. California and they had a demonstration of APRS going all during the time of the convention. There were a number of people around the operation so you could ask all the questions you wished and get good answers. In this operation they referred to this as APRS, for Automatic Position Reporting System., and joins packet and GPS into one system.

This is an operation which allows you to have a map of the area on a computer and on that map will be a marker for every mobile that has a working GPS system. If you see that marker change position on the map, then that station is moving. Now comes my introduction to TAPR and their whole bevy of files for downloading on the Internet including a map program called WINAPRS (there is a Mac version also) which is shareware and the fee is not all that much. This comes complete with some maps of the US, and these can be broken down into West, East, Midwest, etc.

There is a neat book out, in the ARRL library called, "Getting on track with APRS". Get a copy, it is worth it if you are just getting started.

Now I have two interests in this whole thing. Imagine going into a strange town, using your laptop and GPS receiver and you are able to find your way around without a lot of trouble .. that would be wonderful. Then, in your own backyard, imagine an emergency operation with the Red Cross in a flooded area or forest fire area, or even a running event, and you want to know where your mobiles are. Establish a computer at the control point, call up WINAPRS, and tune in to your equipped mobiles. Watch them on the map, and direct them to the correct exit or road. Out here, in a fire situation, we have to refer to road numbers established by the forest people and doing this by voice is difficult in the area we generally work in.

How about your Chapter getting involved as a back-up for the community emergency operations? Then get other amateurs involved and have one of the best of response groups. GPS receivers can be had for a minimum investment. Egghead software has one that you can install and has its own maps, for about \$150 and I am sure it could work with the WINAPRS operation.

Just received a newsletter from our Hawaiian Chapter announcing a meeting and they gave the Latitude and Longitude for anyone with GPS capabilities, so they could find the meeting place. !!

Directory

May 1st has come and gone and we have slowed way down on requests for the Directory which will be printed right after July 1, 1997. The membership rolls will be closed June 30, 1997 and all those who are members as of that date will appear in the Directory. This is the same procedure we followed in 1993 when the last Directory was published.

Please, make a mental note, any requests received now will need to have a fee of \$7.00 added to the request, as previously stated in the President's column in the Winter Journal. This includes the mailing of the Directory.

We plan on updating about 1/3 of the Directory each year which will put that reference material into better condition than in the past, when we published every three years.

The net result is that those who really want a Directory are going to get it and QCWA is not going to spend over \$34,000 every couple of years to produce and mail a Directory. At the moment it appears that we have almost 500 members who have requested a copy. When we go to print there will be some excess volumes printed for those who come in later to the organization. All in all, this is going to be good for everyone.

Remember any requests now need to be accompanied with \$7.00 ..



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May 1, 1997

To all Chapter Secretaries:

I feel sure you must all be aware of the QCWA Taping Program for the sight impaired.

We need your help. Remember if you can't read you would not know about the program. It is up to those of us who have our sight to get the word to those members who are not so fortunate.

There is no charge for the tapes and the member, if they wish, may keep the tapes for reference. We ask only that the little box the tapes are mailed in be returned. Instructions are on the tape and postage is free.

This program will be 10 years old with the Spring issue and we average about 70 members who receive the tapes. With a QCWA membership of approximately 10,000 we know there are many more who just do not know about the program.

Again I say we need your help. It is our responsibility to help our Chapter members who need this service. At your meetings or on your nets and in your Newsletters please remind your members to let us know of any blind or sight impaired member so that we may add their name to the list to receive the tapes. Be sure to tell them there is no charge.

The tapes include as many interesting articles as possible on a 90 minute tape as well as the Chapter News of the Chapters to which our sight impaired members belong. Those who receive the tapes thank us over and over for the service and tell us how much they enjoy it.

Thank you.

Blanche Randles, W4GXZ
Taping Coordinator
6002 N. Fremont Av.
Tampa, FL 33604

To Chapter Secretaries

The other half of the office has requested that we revisit the process of the Secretaries requesting certificates for their members.

First: Please don't present us with a list of 10 or 15 and need them in a couple of days. We just cannot produce them that quick.

Second: Research your dates carefully before you send us your list and please give us their correct names and calls. We frequently have to return the material because of an incorrect call and/or name.

Third: You can do this by e-mail, or a letter with a list of everyone. The e-mail is checked every morning, rain or shine.

One of the best events, for many Chapters, is an annual meeting where the certificates are presented to the various members. Give it a try and see how your membership enjoys the meeting.

One other item, each Chapter is allowed one Meritorious Award each calendar year. This is an action of the officers and with general approval of the membership. When you send us the request give us some information so we can develop the correct wording on the certificate. There are a lot of deserving members out there, let's acknowledge them the best we can.

Membership

During this, our 50th anniversary year, we have a competition going on to see who might produce the most new members. There a large number of potential members out there, and all you have to do is invite them to join you. Really !! Problem is, as I sit back and read the mail, many do not want to do anything preferring to let others do the work. This is true with all organizations. However, if you can 'cast out' that attitude and solicit some new members you will be caught up in the activity and really have a lot of fun. What we should do is make a video of the activity at the QCWA booth at Dayton. It would be an education for all of us.

I have made searches of the data base for a number of chapters to let them know about all the unattached members in a certain zip code spread area.

This year when we make the printout to accompany the Chapter Report form I will include all the delinquent members of the Chapter. There is a built in group that will come back if you approach and ask them to return. Jazz up your meetings, get some good speakers, entertain the opposite partners too and you will start to have a great Chapter. Keep good records and above all try to put out a scheduled newsletter to all of your members. It will pay off.

